

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and remarks herewith, which place the application into condition for allowance. The present amendment is being made to facilitate prosecution of the application.

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS AND FORMAL MATTERS

Claims 1-7, 10-13, 16 and 17 are currently pending. Claims 8, 9, 14, 15 and 18 are hereby canceled without prejudice or surrender of subject matter. Claims 1, 4, 11 and 12 are independent. Support for this amendment is provided throughout the Specification as originally filed.

Claims 1-7, 10-13, 16 and 17 recite allowable subject matter as noted in the Office Action. Rejected claims 8, 9, 14, 15 and 18 are canceled putting the application in condition for allowance.

Changes to the claims are not made for the purpose of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §101, §102, §103, or §112. Rather, these changes are made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which Applicants are entitled.

II. ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicants thank the Examiner for noting that claims 1-7, 10-13, 16 and 17 recite allowable subject matter.

The rejected claims have been canceled. Thus, the application has been put in condition for allowance.

III. CLAIM OBJECTIONS

Claim 9 has been canceled. Thus, the objection to the informality noted in the Office Action is moot.

IV. INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The Office Action objected to the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) filed 10/28/2005 as failing to comply with 37 C.F.R. 1.97 and MPEP §609 because the abstracts of the submitted Foreign Documents were not in the English language.

Applicants respectfully contend the IDS filed 10/28/2005 is in accordance with MPEP requirements. Specifically, MPEP §609.04(a), which states, in relevant part:

“Where the information listed is not in the English language, but was cited in a search report or other action by a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, the requirement for a concise explanation of relevance can be satisfied by submitting an English-language version of the search report or action which indicates the degree of relevance found by the foreign office. This may be an explanation of which portion of the reference is particularly relevant, to which claims it applies, or merely an ‘X,’ ‘Y,’ or ‘A’ indication on a search report.”

This application is a §371 of PCT/JP2005/002967. The references cited in the IDS filed 10/28/2005 were all cited in the International Search Report (ISR) of the PCT application. An English language version of the ISR was provided with the filing of the present application. The ISR provides which portion of the reference is particularly relevant, the claims to which the reference applies and/or the category ‘X,’ ‘Y,’ or ‘A.’ A copy of the ISR is provided herewith for convenience.

Applicants respectfully request consideration of the references provided in the IDS filed 10/28/2005.

V. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 8 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0025100 of Lee et al. (hereinafter, merely "Lee") in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0109492 of Viero et al. (hereinafter, merely "Viero"); and

Claims 9, 14 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Lee in view of Viero and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,023,897 to Kurihara.

Claims 8, 9, 14, 15 and 18 have been canceled. Thus, the rejection of claims 8, 9, 14, 15 and 18 under §103(a) is moot.

CONCLUSION

Claims 1-7, 10-13, 16 and 17 are in condition for allowance. In the event the Examiner disagrees with any of statements appearing above with respect to the disclosure in the cited reference, or references, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner specifically indicate those portions of the reference, or references, providing the basis for a contrary view.

Please charge any additional fees that may be needed, and credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims in this application are patentable and Applicants respectfully request early passage to issue of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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